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25th Meeting
Monday, 10 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The first speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, His Excellency the Honourable Alpian Allen. I now call on him.

Mr. Allen (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): As we prepare to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the memory of the cold war is fading rapidly from our minds. We recall the nostalgia with which we heralded the end of the era and the concomitant universal aspirations to a world of peace and prosperity.

The world has witnessed the triumph of democracy in several areas and the resolution of conflicts that had originated in a war maintained by the earlier East-West confrontation. However, the images of violence, famine and destruction that flicker daily on our television screens suggest some urgency for the world community to attempt to put an end to the violence and the senseless destruction of human lives.

It is against this backdrop, Sir, that we welcome someone with your wide diplomatic experience and wisdom as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that you will make an important contribution to the further success of our deliberations on the vital and major issues of our time.

Your predecessor, our Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and West Indian brother Ambassador Samuel R. Insanally, has established a superb record of achievements, on which I would like to congratulate him warmly.

At this juncture in the history of the United Nations, our Organization is fortunate to have a Secretary-General like Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a person eminently suited by training and disposition to guide the membership of this body towards a new era of peace and prosperity that we hope will emerge from the debris o the cold war.

My delegation takes this opportunity to welcome the new South Africa into our midst as an equal Member of the Organization, ready to participate in all its activities in accordance with the purposes and the principles of the United Nations Charter. We now join the courageous people of South Africa as they celebrate with happiness and pride their victory over the struggle of the century: the fight against apartheid. At long last they have rid themselves of the shackles of that abominable crime and have finally removed the greatest blemish from the continent of Africa. We congratulate Mr. Nelson Mandela and salute his determined march from prison to President. He symbolizes the aspirations of the South African people and the values of non-racialism, democracy and peace. Indeed, this is a lesson in perseverance and faith in the human spirit.

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The voice of the international community was clearly heard as it worked to mobilize public opinion against the injustice of apartheid, and we are now greatly relieved that the question of its elimination will finally be removed from the agenda of succeeding session of the General Assembly.

My delegation hailed the historic Agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was signed on 13 September 1993 in Washington, D.C. We also welcomed the historic breakthrough that gave impetus to an overall Arab-Israeli settlement when Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein met in Washington last July and laid the foundation for the establishment of a peace treaty between the two countries. The international community must also be heartened by the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Morocco and by an apparent thaw in relations between Israel and Syria. We are all looking forward with great anticipation to the commencement of negotiations between the two Governments. It is our hope that these initiatives signal the beginning of the end of one of the longest standing and most intractable conflicts of our time and that they herald an era of peace, security and political stability in the Middle East.

The recent peace overtures in the Middle East are yet another demonstration of the dramatic changes in international relations that have taken place since the collapse of communism and the end of the cold war. In this context my Government is optimistic that the still-unresolved major international political issues will be similarly settled. I refer in particular to the problem of North and South Korea and that of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China in Taiwan.

It is the view of the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that the time has come when serious consideration should be given the eligibility of the Republic of China in Taiwan to become a Member of the United Nations. That is why my Government, in association with other like-minded countries, requested the Secretary-General to include an item on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly entitled "Consideration of the exceptional situation of the Republic of China in Taiwan in the international context, based on the principle of universality and in accordance with the established model of parallel representation of divided countries at the United Nations." We trust that this item will soon secure a place on the agenda of the General Assembly and that when it does every Member State of this noble institution will give its full support to this initiative. We cannot preach about the universality of the United Nations while at the same time we ignore the aspirations of over 20 million people in the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Certain present-day international political trends, as I mentioned earlier, give us renewed encouragement and hope of relations being conducted between and within States in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. This, however, does not mean that the world is now free from tension and international disputes.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a persistent crisis which continues to shock us all. Efforts made to date by the international community to halt the aggression by Serbia and Montenegro and to settle the crisis by peaceful means have been in vain. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines regrets that the recent proposals for a political settlement of the conflict have been rejected by the Bosnian Serbs. That rejection carries with it the danger of the continuation and even grave escalation of the conflict. We urge the Bosnian Serbs to accept the proposals of the Contact Group and to resolve their remaining differences in the spirit of peaceful negotiation and reconciliation, thus taking irreversible steps towards a just and durable peace in Bosnia.

As a country blessed with freedom and the absence of racial and religious bigotry, we will always raise our voice against any form of "ethnic cleansing". We also look forward to the reunification of Cyprus and to the departure of foreign occupation troops from all countries.

The vicious cycle of starvation, violence, the breakdown of central authority, and endless conflicts continues to bedevil in varying ways the situation in Somalia, Zaire, Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Burundi and Rwanda. We call upon the United Nations to continue its struggle to establish peace in these areas.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines places a high value on its relations with the Americas since we are part of the same hemisphere. We share the same burning desire for meaningful economic, political and social development. Over the past decade there has been a noticeable and commendable trend towards democratic rule.

The Convention establishing the Association of Caribbean States, which was signed at Cartagena on 24 July 1994, represents an achievement in the areas of

economic cooperation and regional integration, with the ultimate objective of launching new opportunities for the pursuit of collective initiatives by 40 Latin American and Caribbean States, comprising some 200 million people and united by the waters of the Caribbean. The further strengthening of the inter-American system remains a major objective of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

My delegation is very pleased that the use of force was averted in Haiti and that, at long last, democracy and constitutional legitimacy will be returned to that land. We are equally delighted to learn that General Cedras has decided to relinquish power, thus paving the way for the return of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

My delegation wishes to commend President Clinton for the leadership and determination he has shown in support of the international community's effort to restore democracy to Haiti and hope and dignity to the Haitian people. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will continue to be an active participant in all arrangements aimed at ensuring the safe return of President Aristide and in the eventual rebuilding process.

Among the goals that the founding fathers of the United Nations set for the Organization were promoting

> "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom"

and recognizing development as an inalienable right of mankind. Regrettably, third-world countries like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines feel very strongly that this goal has so far been very elusive. With the end of the cold war and the relative success of the United Nations in its peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcement roles, the international community must now attempt to grapple more seriously with the developmental problems faced by third-world countries.

If countries like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are to survive in this harsh world environment, careful and urgent consideration must be given by the international community to the following measures: first, revitalizing growth in developed countries; secondly, liberalizing trade, especially to give market access to the products of developing countries; thirdly, reducing debt and the debt-service burden; fourthly, reversing the deteriorating marketing situation for the primary products of developing countries; fifthly, increasing official development assistance and humanitarian aid; and sixthly, creating a sensitivity to the reduction in net capital flows from bilateral and multilateral sources, as well as to the negative consequences of the graduation of some countries, such as ours, from concessionary funding arrangements of a number of multilateral institutions.

The changing world environment dictates the need for the revitalization and restructuring of the various organs of the United Nations. At the last session of the General Assembly Saint Vincent and the Grenadines called for enlargement of the membership of the Security Council to reflect the current global reality. Today we repeat that call.

My Government attaches very high priority to revitalizing and strengthening the role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for economic and social development. We share the view that the United Nations should be encouraged to develop its full potential in the area of international economic cooperation and should be endowed with the necessary resources to enable it to contribute to solving the serious economic and social problems facing developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustained economic growth and development.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines hopes that the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development, together with the conclusions of, and the follow-up to, the Rio Conference and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Barbados, as well as summits and conferences such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, will all contribute to better understanding of the problems faced by developing countries and assist the evolution of a global consensus and the mobilization of adequate resources to address these problems effectively.

We do not, however, support the creation of new bureaucracies. There are already enough institutions. What we need are better terms and a speedier reaction to established needs.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to be plagued by the modern-day problem of the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs and psychotropic substances. This scourge poses a serious

threat to the well-being of our people and threatens to destroy the social and moral fabric of our communities.

The archipelagic nature of our State, its many bays and cays and the mountainous terrain and rich alluvial soil of mainland Saint Vincent are characteristics that attract many visitors to our shores and provide scarce foreign exchange to assist us in the development of our country. These very features, however, operate against us in our war against the illicit production of drugs and their distribution by drug barons and their associates. Due to our limited resources, we are unable to police and control our borders and coastlines effectively.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines supports every single measure taken by the United Nations to cope with this serious problem, and calls for continued efforts to eliminate this global scourge.

At the local level, we have been taking forceful steps to confront this evil — pursuing a dynamic drug-abuse-prevention drive and at the same time launching major administrative, legislative and judicial initiatives against the marketing and trafficking of drugs.

My country has viewed with great interest the measures taken by the Secretary-General to revitalize the United Nations so that it is better prepared to attain the objectives of the Charter. In particular, I wish to emphasize the active peace-keeping role of the Organization in the resolution of conflicts that originated before the end of the cold war and of new tensions emerging in hot spots around the world. The peace-keeping forces operating under the United Nations flag perform a fundamental role by paving the way to dialogue and negotiation, thus preventing prolonged confrontations.

We wholeheartedly support this major peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcing thrust of the United Nations. However, we feel that the criteria used in financing the forces involved must be re-examined. The cost of such operations is beginning to prove quite burdensome for both the Organization and its Member States, especially those, like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with a limited resource base. We look forward to efforts to alleviate the financial burden placed on small developing States by the frequent deployment of such operations.

Today, as we prepare to mark an important milestone in the history of the United Nations, and as we approach the beginning of the twenty-first century, we look forward to a world where democracy, peace, sustainable development and human welfare are be available to all. Mankind has spent almost half a century in pursuit of these goals. Let us continue the struggle and never tire in its pursuit.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the next speaker, the Minister for External Relations of Mongolia.

Mr. Gombosuren (Mongolia): May I offer you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on your election to the high post of President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are confident that under your able guidance the General Assembly will make significant progress on the important issues before it.

We express our deep gratitude to Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for his admirable work during his presidency.

At the outset, I wish to extend our heartfelt felicitations to the Republic of South Africa, which has begun its advancement along the road of democracy by dismantling the apartheid regime of racial discrimination and has assumed its rightful place in the community of nations. This historic event testifies to the fact that the purposes and principles that guide the United Nations, including that of respect for human rights, can be translated into reality.

A number of other meaningful positive developments have taken place on the international scene over the last year, events that are inextricably linked to the tortuous emergence of a new atmosphere in the wake of the cold war. None the less, instability continues to plague various corners of the globe, bearing witness to the extreme difficulty of finding solutions to problems; hence the urgent need to harmonize our efforts and enhance the role of the United Nations.

The international community is on the threshold of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. As part of the world-wide preparations for this event, a committee has been established in Mongolia to coordinate national activities. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations coincides with the demise of the cold war, the advent of a new era of mutual trust and partnership among nations and the emergence of unprecedented opportunities to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. This anniversary will serve as an important moment of reflection on the Organization's

past, the lessons from both its successes and its failures and the tasks ahead of us. The world community expects the anniversary session next year to be crowned by the adoption at the summit level of a visionary document embodying its hopes and aspirations and outlining meaningful objectives for the new millennium. It is against this background that we see the special significance of this session of the General Assembly, which is to lay a sound foundation for the anniversary.

The Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Development" is a highlight of this session of the General Assembly. My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for producing a thought-provoking report which offers a comprehensive approach to development and innovative ideas for consideration. We hope that the upcoming discussion of that report will help in the search for an adequate response to persistent inequalities and imbalances, as well as ways to combat the abject poverty, external debt burden and environmental degradation that negatively affect the developing countries.

"An Agenda for Development" is expected to promote people-centred sustainable development through, *inter alia*, a meaningful North-South partnership. In this connection, it would be advisable that the targets of earmarking 0.7 per cent of the industrialized countries' gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance and allocating 20 per cent of that assistance for human priority concerns be reflected in that "Agenda". We also wish to see included in the "Agenda" the idea of allocating 20 per cent of the budget of the developing countries for the aforementioned purpose. An active South-South cooperation is of vital importance for the sustainable development and self-reliance of the developing countries. In this regard the establishment of the South Centre will have a significant bearing on the strengthening of the foundations of such cooperation.

The problems facing the countries in transition and the need for international cooperation to overcome them have found, in our view, a proper reflection in the "Agenda". In order to ensure the success of transition, which has a direct bearing on the future of world developments, it is only fair that greater attention be given to enhancing the effectiveness of international cooperation towards that end. Furthermore, this cooperation should be tailored to the specific conditions of countries in transition. In the case of Mongolia, aside from such handicaps as a low level of development and a disadvantageous geographical location, our economy, in fact, finds itself dependent on another crisis-stricken country in transition.

We believe that the time has come to make every effort to resolve the external debt problem of developing countries, taking into account the vital interests of their socio-economic development and the urgent need to lay the foundation for equitable economic cooperation. On the other hand, it is incumbent upon the creditor nations to display the political will to deal resolutely with that intractable problem. One might add that the realistic assessment of the underlying political and economic causes of the multiplying debt burden should be borne in mind in addressing this issue.

The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the ensuing decision to create the World Trade Organization represent an important step towards a fairer trading system.

We hope that the entry into force of the Convention on the Law of the Sea will facilitate the solution of problems confronting, above all, the least developed, land-locked and geographically disadvantaged States.

The post-Rio period has registered a welcome shift towards the broadening of international cooperation in addressing environmental issues. Nevertheless, we have to admit that there is a significant disparity between the importance that the international community attaches to this problem and the actual results of the work done in protecting the environment and halting the ecological crisis and remedying its consequences. In this regard, I wish to emphasize that commitments, especially those related to the flow of financial resources and the transfer of technology, have to be faithfully honoured.

As a country exposed to drought and desertification, Mongolia welcomes the conclusion of the negotiations on, and the signing of, the international Convention to combat desertification.

The convening of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen next year is a clear manifestation of the fact that social issues are being brought to the centre of the international agenda. We trust that the Summit will serve as a powerful engine for marshalling political will at the highest level and will bring about a viable action programme to effectively address social challenges. This Summit, taken together with the recent International Conference on Population

and Development and the future conferences on women and on human settlements constitute an intertwined continuous process of international consensus building.

Mongolia is advancing along the road of reforms, relying on the active support of the donor community and of international organizations. The International Monetary Fund-supported enhanced structural adjustment facility programme is in its second year of implementation. There is a positive trend towards checking economic decline and inflation and stabilizing the national currency. The role of the private sector in the national economy is growing considerably. Relying on the experience of the years of transition, we are on our way to finding effective ways and means for the State-governed economy. A great deal has been accomplished in laying down the legal foundations for societal life.

Yet underlying problems continue to persist. At times, we face a situation in which one problem succeeds another. The fuel and energy sector is in a critical state. The living standards of the population continue to decline; poverty and unemployment are on the rise. There is a severe shortage of internal financial resources.

In order to make substantive progress in overcoming these and other difficulties, foreign aid will continue to play a decisive role for some time to come. In this respect, we are looking forward to the fourth donor meeting to be held in Tokyo this November. As hardships seem to persist, the practice of holding regular donor meetings under the auspices of Japan and the World Bank remains essential. We trust that we will receive support and understanding from the parties concerned.

However, this is not to say that we are pursuing a lopsided approach to overcoming the crisis and implementing structural economic adjustments, relying solely on outside assistance and ideas. It goes without saying that the only way, eventually, is in the development of equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation. Proceeding from this premise, we endeavour to attract foreign investment, including private investment, and to create the necessary legal, economic and other conditions.

For any State, and for small States in particular, peace and stability in their respective regions are of vital importance. By and large, positive trends are prevailing in our region, despite the continued existence of hotbeds of conflict and tension. An important factor contributing to these trends is the development of Russian-Chinese relations and cooperation within the framework of friendly partnership. Mongolia welcomes the recent agreement between Russia and China not to target each other with strategic nuclear missiles; we see this as a development that augurs well for stability and confidence-building in the region and beyond. The maintenance of good-neighbourly relations with these two countries is of paramount importance to Mongolia, and today these relations are based on new Treaties on friendly relations and cooperation.

As opposed to the headway made in resolving and preventing crisis situations in Asia, there seems to be no discernible shift for the better on the Korean Peninsula. We hope that the new leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the other parties concerned, bearing in mind the international dimensions of the problem, will display great responsibility in addressing the problems at hand.

The agreement between the Government of Tajikistan and the opposition group on a temporary cease-fire constitutes a first, important step towards national reconciliation in Tajikistan, and should be built upon.

Last year's truly historic developments in the Middle East paved the way for the positive steps that we are witnessing today in the efforts to bring peace to the region, inching towards a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict.

We hope that the United States-Cuba bilateral agreement on the immigration question will prove to have a far-reaching impact on resolving the outstanding issues between these two countries.

We commend the peaceful manner in which the goal of restoring democracy in Haiti was achieved.

The wars that continue to rage in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Afghanistan and the tragedies in Rwanda and Somalia testify to the highly complex nature of these problems and remind us again that the efforts of the international community to resolve them should by no means decrease in intensity.

Bold steps are needed, particularly by the nuclear-weapon States, to solve the mutually interlinked problems of the indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty and the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1995, as well as credible security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is gratifying to note that the five nuclear-weapon States supported Mongolia's declaration of its territory as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and expressed their intention to respect that status. The Non-Aligned Movement has also welcomed that initiative as a commendable contribution to regional stability and confidence-building. In an effort to contribute to the establishment of an effective verification system for the future comprehensive test-ban treaty, Mongolia has expressed its interest in being part of the global seismic monitoring network. We stand ready to cooperate on this question with the interested parties.

The unchecked arms trade and its increase to global proportions, and especially its extension into volatile and unstable regions of the world, is fraught with dangerous consequences. We believe that it is high time for the United Nations to take a close and comprehensive look at the issue with a view to formulating the legal parameters of the conduct of States in this respect.

In recent years the role and influence of the Non-Aligned Movement in world politics have grown. Considerable progress has been achieved in implementing the Jakarta Final Document, which epitomized the new strategy of the Movement in the post-cold-war era. The Cairo Ministerial Conference, held last June, contributed to the enhancement of the Movement's activities. Here, I should also like to mention that this Conference emphasized the need to augment the Movement's efforts with a view to adequately responding to common problems facing the developing countries.

I wish to make a few more comments on the United Nations.

In the wake of the cold-war policy that limited the capacity of the United Nations to implement fully the purposes and principles of its Charter, new opportunities have opened up before the world Organization. All at once, the eyes of the world, full of hope and expectation, have turned to the United Nations. The United Nations has exerted a great deal of effort, and it can be credited with impressive accomplishments, especially in the areas of peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, many Member States have voiced their concern over and criticism of the restructuring of the United Nations and have stressed the need to ensure a proper balance in its activities.

We can well understand the justified criticism that our Organization is disproportionately preoccupied with peace-keeping and security issues at the expense of its urgent development agenda. We expect that with deliberations on and the subsequent adoption of the Agenda for Development there will be less grounds for such criticism.

The composition of the Security Council and its methods of work do not reflect the realities of the time. My delegation hopes that the ongoing deliberations in the Working Group on this issue will be intensified and successfully concluded by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

We commend and support the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat. We are confident that the Secretary-General will persevere in his reform process, and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

The Mongolian people is approaching an auspicious event, which will be observed this coming November — namely, the seventieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, which represents an important juncture in restoring our independence. My people has accomplished since then an arduous journey marked by ups and downs. Today we are continuing our reforms in line with our democratic Constitution of 1992.

In keeping with its foreign policy concept, Mongolia will continue to endeavour to make its own contribution to the common cause of developing friendly relations and cooperation between nations and ensuring peace, security and progress.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney General and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, His Excellency the Honourable Orville Turnquest. I now call on him.

Mr. Turnquest (Bahamas): I wish to join other speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your experience in international affairs, as well as your proven diplomatic skills, provide the assurance of a successful conclusion of our deliberations.

At the same time, I wish to express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Rudolph Insanally, for the distinguished manner in which he presided over this historic Assembly during a particularly challenging forty-eighth session, ably

representing not only his country, Guyana, but the entire Latin American and Caribbean region. We commend him for his performance.

Our Secretary-General continues his outstanding stewardship of the United Nations during these critical times, when this world body is increasingly being called upon to respond to crises of staggering dimensions. The Bahamas appreciates his tireless efforts.

Anniversaries are times of celebration and times of reflection. As this world assembly approaches its fiftieth birthday, it is wholly appropriate that we should seek to evaluate our record.

I believe that we can all agree that in our efforts to guide international relations in the 50 years since the end of the Second World War, there have been both successes and failures. We must surely build on the successes and redirect our energies to effectively reduce the number of failures.

The credible success of this world Organization and its specialized agencies in measurably improving the health, literacy and education standards of the world's poor is no mean achievement. So also has been the success of this body in seeking to ensure the environmental integrity of the planet, in galvanizing the resources of the world to fight the illicit drug traffic, and in peacefully resolving disputes.

We can all be justly satisfied that the persistence of this Assembly played a pivotal role in bringing to an end the racist Government in South Africa. The victory of non-racial democracy in that torn land must give us hope even in the face of the most intractable problems. The Bahamas joins other Members in welcoming South Africa back into the fold of the General Assembly.

The Bahamas fully supports the noble cause of the Government of South Africa as it begins the task of reconciliation and reconstruction. President Nelson Mandela and the people of South Africa can be fully assured of my Government's hand of friendship.

Victory in South Africa allowed us to dare to hope for an opening in Haiti. This Assembly knows very well the long history of abuse of that poor Caribbean nation — a land in which the apartheid of wealth has flourished in a destitute country. For many generations now, Haitian nationals have felt compelled to abandon their homes, frequently in unseaworthy boats, in search of personal dignity and of economic and political liberty.

My country has frequently been their first safe harbour, and, while proud of our record of assistance, we have been and remain ill-equipped to offer such refuge. Members are aware of the tremendous burden that my country has had to bear in this regard. This refuge has been provided by the Bahamas in spite of the absence of either recognition or assistance from the international community.

To say that our education, health and welfare resources have been stretched beyond capacity in our small island developing country is to greatly understate the situation. When we add the extra costs attributable to the necessary marine patrols associated with the monitoring of undocumented persons, the full burden created in the Bahamas by Haitian nationals fleeing their homes begins to become apparent.

Hence, the recognition by this body of the absolute necessity for the world community to forcibly respond to the brutality of the military dictatorship in Haiti is very much appreciated. The support given to the early initiative led by the Caribbean Community to force a resolution of the crisis in Haiti has already borne fruit, and we commend the United States of America for its leadership in this important initiative.

We therefore join in welcoming the formation of the multinational force authorized by the Security Council to take all necessary action to restore the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Notwithstanding the tremendous costs that in recent years have accrued to the Bahamas as a result of developments in Haiti, we have also agreed to lend manpower support to that force.

Today's announcement that the coup leaders have resigned and will be leaving the country now paves the way for the desired return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide later this week.

It is especially important that the international community now dedicate sufficient funding and expertise to the economic reconstruction of Haiti to achieve democracy in that land. It must continue to do so even today as Haitians await the announced departure of the feared military from leadership and the return of their elected President. We who promote and encourage the adoption of democratic forms of government must also accept a degree of responsibility to service that democracy, especially in its infancy. The infant democracy that is struggling to be born in Haiti will

surely die unless it receives the succour and support of the international community.

Since the Second World War, the world community has addressed the plight of political refugees. The increased demand to assist persons fleeing political persecution is demonstrated in the ethnic purges and warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The dramatic exodus, during the first half of this year, of hundreds of thousands of persons across the seas on unseaworthy craft or down long roads across borders dramatically brought to the attention of the world community the plight of undocumented persons seeking shelter outside of their homelands.

The burden borne by the Bahamas as a result of the presence of large numbers of undocumented Haitians is now compounded by the more recent arrival of hundreds of Cubans seeking to enter the United States of America. The Bahamas Government is encouraged by recent efforts by both the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba to address this perennial problem of Cuban migrants.

The gravity of the Haitian crisis, the inhumanity of the genocide in Bosnia, the cruelty of the murders in Rwanda and the ongoing war in Angola all are clarion calls to our Organization and to the world that we must desist from tardy, piecemeal approaches and address in a timely and comprehensive manner not only the effects but the very root causes of these situations.

Not least among these is economics, evidenced by a crisis in development. Despair at the hopeless socio-economic conditions of one's daily life has given rise, in those so affected, to a basic pessimism and to the willingness to risk even one's life for changed circumstances. Where basic needs are unmet and survival is in jeopardy, there is little stake in the future and little reason to consider the sustainability of one's actions. The real threat to our future security is therefore no longer military aggression but deteriorating economic conditions. The alleviation of widespread poverty while managing finite resources in the face of spiralling population growth will be among the major challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Bahamas, therefore, looks forward to the Secretary-General's revised "Agenda for Development", hopeful that it will serve as an effective guideline for the creation and implementation of measures commensurate with the legitimate aspirations of Member States. We must not lose ground in this session by becoming submerged in attempts to redefine development. We must, rather, focus on the different levels of development that exist in our several countries. We must learn their effects and find solutions for narrowing obvious disparities. These solutions must include programmes specially suited to the differing levels of development of Member States.

We must therefore ensure that our quest for sustainable development is people-centred. We must consider sustainable human development with a focus on justice, equality and democratic freedom as well as on material well-being that incorporates equal opportunity for all. Inequity engenders violence, and violence fragments society.

The Bahamas, in spite of its apparent growth and strong economic indicators, is still only a developing nation. However, unlike many other developing nations, the Bahamas is continually frustrated in its efforts to secure international resources and concessionary financing from multilateral institutions because of its reputed level of per capita gross national product.

As a small archipelagic country of a mere 260,000 people scattered over 100,000 square miles, burdened by the cost of transportation and infrastructure replication, and with a very small minority of our residents in an extremely high income bracket whilst the overwhelming majority of the population is at the opposite end of the economic scale, we are advocating that this grossly misleading per capita criterion for gross national product should not be the only basis upon which resources and assistance are allocated to developing countries, such as the Bahamas.

It is the view of the Bahamas that the entire system for determining eligibility for development assistance should be comprehensively reviewed, as it is clear that special consideration ought to be given to countries like the Bahamas, with peculiar imbalances and vulnerabilities. For its part, the Bahamas is engaged in a process of refining its development indicators in an attempt to ensure that data provided to international institutions are truly reflective of our economic-development reality. We expect that the data so provided will also have an impact upon our budgetary assessments.

This comprehensive review, we believe, must include consideration of the vulnerability index identified in the Programme of Action of the Global Conference on Small Island Developing States as the direction to be

followed in the development of a measurement of the ecological fragility and economic vulnerability of small island developing States.

In this connection, I would remind the Assembly of an important message which was reinforced by the recent Conference on Small Island Developing States, that is, that unless the peculiar difficulties of these States are properly addressed, those States will not have the wherewithal to proceed on a path to sustainable development.

The marine environment presents both an opportunity and a constraint with respect to the sustainable development and security of any island State. As a maritime nation, the Bahamas attaches tremendous importance to the Convention, which has resulted in the creation of a new legal regime for the oceans. Among its new achievements are the recognition of the legal status of archipelagos, the 12-mile territorial sea, transit passage, the exclusive economic zone, and the protection and preservation of the marine environment and the resources of the deep seabed as the common-heritage of mankind.

The Bahamas was particularly pleased to join with other Member States in signing the agreement on seabed mining in July of this year, as that agreement modifies provisions that had prevented many States from becoming parties to the Convention. The long awaited entry into force of the Convention is therefore of extreme importance, as it provides a boost to our efforts to curb infringement on both our national security and our national resources.

While the socio-economic health of the world still presents challenges for the Organization, we have scored some political successes in the recent past. These successes include, of course, the peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in September of last year, which led to self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho for the Palestinian people, and the signing of the Washington Declaration between Israel and Jordan last July. We also applaud and encourage the dialogue now under way between Israel and Syria.

In spite of those successes, peace-keeping still occupies an important place in our activities. However, we must ensure that peace-keeping operations are not conducted at the expense of other activities which are equally important, such as the development programmes of the United Nations. After all, development is a prerequisite for peace.

For small countries with limited resources, such as the Bahamas, a major justification for membership in international organizations is the enhancement of national capacity. It is therefore the duty of the United Nations to facilitate the efforts of small countries to arrive at just and equitably sound solutions to differences within the international society of States, especially when they involve political and economic giants.

It is from this perspective that the Bahamas supports the efforts of the Republic of China to entreat the Organization to examine the merits of establishing an ad hoc committee to analyse comprehensively the current implications and future ramifications of the preclusion of the 21 million people in the Republic of China from contributing to, and availing themselves of, all the benefits deriving from membership in the United Nations and its affiliated agencies. Our Organization is expected to reflect universality and to demonstrate impartiality when forging international agreements for policy commitments, for accessing resources and for action.

The Bahamas welcomes the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the question of more equitable representation within the membership of the Security Council. The Group's work thus far has been positive and constructive, and we trust that the momentum of its discussions will be maintained.

The report on the Security Council is of importance to all Member States. As its conclusions affect each Member quite directly, it is essential that the Council should be seen to reflect as accurately as possible the wishes of the entire international community. Accordingly, it is imperative that the composition of a new Security Council properly reflect regional diversity and thereby enhance the legitimacy of the actions of that important United Nations body.

We in the Bahamas look with great expectation to the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The preparatory period for this event is an ideal time for reflection on targets and objectives which have already been set by our Organization, some of which have now been outstanding for many years. Turning fifty is an opportunity for the Organization to regain the confidence of our peoples. It will take hard work and determination to achieve the desired results so that over the next 50 years the United Nations will be known in all societies and across all levels of those societies as the real leader in the fight to bring dignity to mankind.

In the words of the great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

"We must not hope to be mowers
And to gather the ripe gold ears
Unless we have first been sowers
And watered the furrows with tears.

"It is not just as we take it,
This mystical world of ours;
Life's field will yield as we make it:
A harvest of thorns or of flowers."

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chad, Mr. Ahmat Abderaman Haggar.

Mr. Haggar (Chad) *(interpretation from French)*: Allow me, Sir, to convey to you on behalf of the people and Government of Chad, our heartfelt congratulations on your unanimous election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It was a resounding tribute to your country, whose devotion to peace and dialogue is well known. Not simply Côte d'Ivoire, but the whole of Africa has thus been honoured.

We should like to take this opportunity to salute the memory of the late President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, whose renown as a statesman extended beyond our continent.

I should also like to convey heartfelt thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Rudolph Insanally of Guyana, for the skill with which he conducted the business of our previous session.

Finally, I wish to express our profound gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedication to international peace and security, to which he has contributed with "An Agenda for Peace", now supplemented by "An Agenda for Development".

We welcome the return to this Hall of South Africa, a South Africa now free of apartheid. We welcome it and wish every success to President Nelson Mandela, whose tenacity should once again be commended.

The picture of the international situation following the end of the cold war is mixed, being one of both hope and uncertainty.

The evolving peace process in the Middle East is an important step towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of a crisis which has persisted for too long. We pay warm tribute to the Israeli and Palestinian leaders who, with their foresightedness and sense of history, have taken this decisive step. We venture to hope that the peoples of this region, sorely in need of peace, have the benefit of the wholehearted support of the international community.

We also commend the efforts now going on to restore democracy to Haiti.

Chad has also been following with interest the process under way in Mozambique, and we hope that the elections to be held on 27 and 28 October will pave the way to a new era of peace and prosperity.

However, grim situations still continue. How can one fail to be outraged at the daily events occurring in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Liberia, Afghanistan or Somalia? Chad, which has been through three decades of conflict, sympathizes with the tragic experience of the peoples of these countries and condemns practices based on ethnic, racial and religious criteria, practices which belong to the past.

This was one of the reasons which prompted my Government to make a modest contribution, first, by its military presence with the French force in *Opération Turquoise*, and then in the second United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda.

Chad urges the United Nations to continue its tireless, energetic peacemaking and peace-keeping efforts and asks the parties involved in any conflict to attach greater importance to dialogue.

In this regard, we welcome developments in the ongoing talks to bring lasting peace to Angola.

We appeal for a speedy solution to the question of the embargo afflicting the Libyan people, a solution in keeping with resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The proliferation of armed conflicts in Africa is a great challenge to us. Chad therefore makes an urgent appeal to the international community to give its wholehearted support to the OAU's machinery for

conflict-prevention, conflict-management and the settlement of conflicts.

Conflicts of any kind are always a disaster for the human race. Therefore, in order to save present and future generations from the danger of a nuclear holocaust, my country supports the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Conventional weapons are a permanent source of concern for Chad. That is why we support resolution 48/75 E and welcome the initiative by President Alpha Omar Konare of Mali to halt the proliferation of such weapons in our region.

Economic development is a constant concern of the international community. That is why the various initiatives and discussions on the subject, as well as the apt analysis in the Agenda for Development, deserve careful consideration at this session. The worsening economic crisis, marked by chronic indebtedness and the drop in the price of raw materials in developing countries in general, and in Africa in particular, has torn at the weak social fabric and threatened the stability of States. This explains the spread of phenomena such as juvenile delinquency, widespread drug-trafficking and organized crime.

However, we look forward to the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen next year, and to the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, also next year.

They will give the international community an opportunity to discuss today's challenges and to try to improve the lives of millions of human beings.

I now turn to Chad, where the democratic process which began with the coming to power of the Patriotic Salvation Movement is continuing, to the satisfaction of all, thanks to the wisdom of our President, His Excellency Colonel Idriss Déby, who has honoured the spirit and the letter of the historic declaration of 4 December 1990 to establish a State of law.

The Sovereign National Conference organized, in a spirit of transparency, with the participation of citizens of Chad of all strata and all political leanings in the presence of foreign observers, adopted a consistent, comprehensive strategy. It thus reflected the general consensus on resolving all our problems, and in particular the creation of a State that respects the rule of law. To that end, a schedule was worked out and transitional institutions were established.

At the last session, my delegation took note of progress made towards democratization. I am happy to say from this rostrum that the transition in Chad is proceeding normally thanks to cooperation between the three organs, the presidency, the *primature* and the Higher Transitional Council.

In order to keep within our deadlines, the framework agreement was reduced to more realistic proportions, backed up *inter alia* by the following priorities: the elaboration of a constitution and texts to govern the upcoming elections; the establishment of a national reconciliation committee consisting of governmental representatives, representatives of the provisional parliament, political parties and civilians. That committee has already achieved some results by signing certain agreements with some organizations, in particular the Bangui II Agreement. We express gratitude to His Excellency Ange Félix Patassé, President of the Central African Republic, for the decisive role he has played throughout the negotiations. At the same time the national reconciliation committee is continuing its contacts with other political and military groups. Our Government is confident that definitive peace will be restored to our country.

Considerable progress has been made in the restructuring of the national army but much remains to be done because of the complexity of the problem of demobilizing elements and reintegrating them into civilian life. We reiterate once more our appeal to the international community to provide assistance in carrying out this essential programme for lasting peace in Chad.

The signing of a social covenant concluded between the Government and the trade unions took place on 1 July 1994. It restored social peace and is the reason for the important progress that has been made in applying the provisions of the framework agreement.

Equally important progress has also been made in other areas. I wish to speak now of human rights and freedoms. For almost four years now we have seen the unprecedented establishment of several independent newspapers, the formation of many political parties, 49 of which have been legalized, and the creation of unions and human rights associations.

The recent establishment of the Supreme Council for Communications is another guarantee of freedom of expression, opinion and information.

I turn now to human rights. My country, which has experienced one of the most cruel and misguided dictatorships, attaches great importance to the promotion and defence of these rights. The ratification of various international instruments and, more recently, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights and the authorization provided by my Government for the visit to Chad of an independent expert from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, attest to this will.

The Government of the Republic of Chad is therefore surprised that certain press organs, certain human rights associations and organizations, manipulated by those who are fighting for power, have launched a campaign that is seeking to mislead international opinion by spreading false information about Chad.

I wish to draw attention to the special situation in my country, where there are many political and military groups equipped with weapons, as a consequence of the long conflict. The abuses committed by uncontrolled groups cannot and should not be attributed to Government policy to violate human rights. I should like, therefore, to take this opportunity to call on all countries and governmental and non-governmental organizations that are interested in Chad and in the future of its people to come to my country to establish the facts.

Free democratic elections will be organized at the beginning of next year in keeping with the timetable established by the framework agreement. On 7 October 1994 His Excellency Colonel Idriss Déby, Head of State, once again reaffirmed his determination to respect the timetable for the elections to give the country reliable democratic institutions, *inter alia*, to guarantee the rights of all citizens. Accordingly, we ask our traditional partners to assist the Government of Chad to conclude this delicate mission which require many resources.

I now turn to the question of the border dispute that existed between my country and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. On 3 February 1994 the International Court of Justice in its Judgment put an end to this 20-year-old conflict. An Agreement on the practical modalities for the implementation of that Judgment was signed on 4 April 1994 in Surt. In keeping with the Agreement the withdrawal of Libyan troops from the Aouzou Strip was carried out according to an agreed timetable and under the supervision of United Nations observers. Now all that remains to be done is to make a reality of the border as defined between the two countries.

I wish to reiterate my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the peaceful solution of this dispute and our gratitude to the United Nations. This fortunate outcome, which reflects the pre-eminence of negotiation over confrontation, is a reason for hope in the matter of prevention and resolution of conflicts.

In the framework of the rehabilitation of the Aouzou Strip and the reintegration of the local population, Chad has already set up a technical committee to study the various aspects of rehabilitation, particularly the restoration of infrastructure, the cultivation of our oases, and the restoration of our education and public health systems. We should also create an environment conducive to all these actions by carrying out mine clearance and disinfecting wells that were poisoned during the occupation. We appeal to the entire international community to help us to carry out this programme.

Chad, like many other countries in Africa, is confronting an unprecedented economic and financial crisis. Existing difficulties have been compounded by the devaluation of the CFA franc, which has wiped out all the efforts by the Government within the structural adjustment framework. My country regrets the fact that the steps to accompany the devaluation have not been entirely honoured. We urge some of our partners to comply with their commitments in this respect.

Chad is a country which is half desert and has suffered a rapid degradation of its environment because of its lack of energy resources and we welcome, therefore, the signing on 17 June 1994 in Paris of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. We hope that the provisions of the Convention will not remain a dead letter.

While in the Sahel rain is welcomed enthusiastically, the rainfall, which has been particularly abundant this year, has caused flooding in many regions of my country, causing serious damage to crops and leaving many

families homeless. At the same time an epidemic of cholera has broken out in some cities in Chad.

We are working together with our various partners, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to deal with these situations following appeals made respectively by the Ministers of Agriculture and Health.

The United Nations will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year. To meet the many challenges we must adapt to present changes. Therefore my country supports the common African position on restructuring and the revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

I turn now to the Security Council. I wish to recall that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad stated from this rostrum on 8 October 1976 that

> "The Security Council, whose principal role is to safeguard international peace and security, should reflect the geographical composition of the international community." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 23rd meeting, para. 22)*

In the light of ongoing discussion of this question, we reiterate this position because it is a requirement of our time.

I cannot conclude my statement without saying that we hope that the work of the present session will yield answers to our legitimate concerns.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Equatorial Guinea, on whom I now call.

Mr. Oyono Ndong Mifumu (Equatorial Guinea) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I would be disloyal to the feelings of the delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea if I did not from the outset join with the preceding speakers in expressing my best wishes to you and congratulating you on your well-deserved election to the Presidency of this General Assembly. I wish you every success and assure you of the complete cooperation of my delegation. Please convey my congratulations also to the other members of the General Committee, whose work is not always given due recognition.

We also commend the work accomplished by Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who presided over the last session of the General Assembly. And I wish to express special appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our distinguished Secretary-General, for his deep commitment to the search for viable solutions to the problems and difficulties confronting mankind today.

This forty-ninth session of the General Assembly is being held at a time when the international community is expressing its concern at the bleak panorama that the world offers us, and more than ever is proclaiming its right to preserve peace and the socio-political and economic stability of the world. This session of the General Assembly, therefore, must not disappoint these pressing aspirations of the human community, which has every reason to continue to consider the United Nations as the hope of mankind.

It is illogical and inconceivable to the peoples of our world that after the fall of the ideological borders that shaped the bipolar world, we should again be confronted with new burdens and contradictions. My country is deeply concerned at the negative effect of the wave of violence in many parts of the world today. In record time, we have seen evidence of many sources of tension and conflicts that wipe out many years of United Nations efforts. Everywhere panic and uncertainty prevail, owing to the intolerance and arbitrariness that are real threats to world peace. None the less, it would seem that we all want to close our eyes and act as though we did not know the causes of this instability. For the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the causes are all interdependent: poverty, inequality in relations among nations, unemployment, ignorance, and political and religious intolerance.

This forty-ninth session of our General Assembly must therefore reflect deeply in order to find a global solution to these common denominators of all our countries. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea wishes to reaffirm here, from this rostrum, the confidence that it has placed in the United Nations and our conviction that this Organization is the ideal framework for resolving the difficult, delicate and complex problems confronting the international community.

In this grim international panorama, my country, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, is endeavouring to preserve internal peace and political stability, and to maintain a strict policy of good-neighbourliness and

cooperation with the other countries of central Africa. In this framework, we have been strengthening the internal socio-political structures that make it possible to coordinate an integral, democratic system that guarantees the individual and collective freedoms of our citizens. Indeed in 1991, the Government began a transition on the basis of established constitutional provisions and has been establishing the political environment conducive to political pluralism and a multiparty system. A number of legal regulations now govern the exercise of pluralist democracy in my country. May I mention, among them: the law of political parties, the law of freedom of association and expression, our trade union law, the law of freedom of the press and printed matter, the law of freedom of religion, the law of complaints and petitions, and all the other laws that govern the electoral process.

Therefore, the fact is that Equatorial Guinea today is a free, democratic and independent country where peace and stability prevail. With only 400,000 inhabitants, we have 14 political organizations that operate freely and democratically and constitute the pluralist expression of our peoples. None the less, as everyone knows, there are some who, because of their concealed interests, have attempted, and continue to attempt, to thwart the will of some of our political leaders in our democratic process. This is the root cause of the disinformation campaign that is being waged against my country.

Allow me to dwell a moment on this point. Because my country is being subjected to a systematic international campaign of disinformation through certain very well-localized media. Hence a negative image is being projected of my country, in total disregard of the efforts that have been made since 1979 by His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, to restore the respectability and honour of my country after 11 long, bloody years of the dictatorship of Macias Nguema, who was overthrown without anyone helping us. Regarding this campaign of disinformation, there is a saying that I would like to reiterate here: "The truth is one, but untruth is manifold". Everything depends on the colour of the lens through which one looks. There are some who, because of their own unconfessed interests prefer to continue to look at us through a dark lens; but we ask the international community to assess our actions in a neutral and objective way, without allowing itself to be influenced by third parties. We ask that you view us through a clear lens that will allow you to see the reality.

Please do not misunderstand me. We are not against the contribution of the international community to the efforts of the people and Government of Equatorial Guinea for democracy and the promotion of human rights and freedoms, but we do believe that these objectives cannot be achieved by promoting and instigating ungovernability, anarchy and civil disobedience in the developing countries.

We see some countries now using the international community's demand for respect for human rights and democracy to mask activities that are aimed at subjugating developing countries such as Equatorial Guinea. None the less, we would like to point out that in the course of this year, certain donors, such as France and Spain and the United Nations Development Programme, have made a positive contribution to our democratic process by giving moral, technical and economic support to our efforts to consolidate democracy. They have done excellent work.

We believe that the escalation of domestic tensions in many African countries today has a common cause: political intolerance, fuelled and promoted by foreign intervention in a country's domestic jurisdiction. However, as the saying goes, "The master's eye makes the horse fat" — in other words, however they may be assessed or distorted from outside, the realities in each of the countries in those regions exist independently of the interpretations placed on them.

We in Equatorial Guinea believe that development and democracy can be promoted only in an atmosphere of peace. We therefore feel that the United Nations should put emphasis on its efforts at preventive action rather than those designed to restore peace or serve as a buffer. Measures such as the dispatch of evaluation or inquiry missions to individual countries can be more effective in avoiding conflicts like those currently taking place in such fraternal and friendly countries as Angola, Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and so on. Interventions after the fact have been shown to have limited effectiveness.

Some peace-keeping missions and operations in certain conflict areas have also undergone a qualitative change. It is therefore urgent to redirect the mechanisms through which the Organization functions and adapt them to the changes in today's world.

We believe that in an increasingly complicated world, and with limited resources, international relations

must be complementary. In this sphere the role of the United Nations has become even more decisive. It is hardly useful for some to attempt to monopolize the solution to the world's problems if we do not all feel sincerely involved. As an earlier speaker in the general debate noted, there can be neither peace nor justice if discrimination exists in international relations.

My country hopes that the new world scene will witness the implementation of procedures for sincere international cooperation on behalf of those countries that need it most, those countries that are struggling not just to maintain the quality of life but often for their very survival. The poverty and misery in all the countries on Earth calls for action by others to remedy their plight.

United Nations efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security contrast with the limited progress achieved in economic and social development. The global chasm separating rich and poor is steadily widening. We need the solidarity of the industrialized countries, on mutually agreed terms, if we developing countries are to find a definitive solution to our external-debt problem, the burden of which is another obstacle to progress and greater social development.

It would be most promising if agreement could be reached on the mechanisms to solve this economic, financial and socio-economic problem. One such mechanism might be a re-examination of the idea of converting external debt into investment and into projects with proven social impact.

The preservation of the environment and the fight against drug trafficking are questions that demand consideration. The 1972 Stockholm Declaration established the foundations for some universal principles for the protection of the global environment and efforts to control pollution and combat desertification and deforestation. Reality, however, called for new initiatives, which culminated in the Rio Conference on Environment and Development. We hope that the results of that Conference will be of benefit to all and help ensure mankind's the sustainable development and future well-being.

I should, however, like to emphasize the obligation of the developed and industrialized countries — which bear the greatest responsibility for the deterioration of the global ecosystem — to those countries that today are being asked to make the sacrifice of limiting their legitimate right to the use of the riches nature has bestowed on them. Fitting compensation must be forthcoming, particularly through the funding of alternative projects and technological cooperation.

Within its modest financial means, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has been and remains ready to take action to improve its national environment as its contribution to the task of preserving nature throughout the world. The Government of Equatorial Guinea is also giving its constant attention to the struggle against the AIDS pandemic, and, thanks to the deep awareness of the people of Equatorial Guinea and the assistance we are receiving from international agencies, we shall spare no effort to control it effectively. From this rostrum we are appealing to the international community to join us in our efforts to speed and support work in these sectors.

For all those reasons, we hope that the United Nations will continue to enjoy the full support of all of us in working to achieve a better world in the coming 50 years.

Mr. Tshering (Bhutan): I have the honour to convey to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to all the delegations here present the warm greetings and good wishes of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, for the success of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I should first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election, which is a testimony to the high regard that the international community has for your country and the confidence of this Assembly in your personal leadership. Given your long association and intimate knowledge of the United Nations, we are sure you will provide the necessary direction on the many important issues that we are about to take up during this session.

I should also like to take this opportunity to place on record our deep appreciation and gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally for the excellent manner in which he conducted the proceedings of our last session. His innovative and vigorous pursuit of discussions on the reform of the United Nations, the restructuring of the Security Council and the hearings on development have set the stage for the current discussions.

We should like to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his distinguished leadership. We appreciate his tireless efforts to steer the United Nations in bold and new directions.

We had the opportunity to welcome President Mandela and to hear his historic and enlightened address in this Hall. We welcome the end of apartheid and South Africa's return to the family of nations.

In the Middle East, the transition of the Gaza Strip and Jericho to Palestinian self-government, the return of President Yasser Arafat and the signing of the Washington Declaration between Jordan and Israel clearly demonstrate the increasing desire for peace in the region. We applaud the parties for the brave decision to embark on the difficult path to peace. It is our hope that all parties will join the process towards peace and reconciliation, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions. It is our hope that the international community will support the Palestinian people in bringing about economic development in the self-rule areas.

The situation in the Gulf warrants our close attention. The international community must reject any threat against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait. We urge all parties to abide by and fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Prince Sisowath Sirirath (Cambodia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The problems in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti and many other parts of the world still demand the careful and urgent attention of the United Nations. These conflicts severely test the international community's capacity and resolve to deal with humanitarian needs and conflict resolution.

We welcome the continued reduction of nuclear weapons and the turning-away of such weapons from their previous targets. We support the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons beyond 1995 and the proposal for the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to continue negotiations in earnest and to comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards agreement; thereby avoiding suspicion and doubt.

My delegation supports the proposal for both the reduction and the clearance of anti-personnel mines. The manufacture of, trade in and deployment of such weapons, which cause indiscriminate and mindless death and maiming, are unconscionable. We urge all parties to participate in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The scope of the exercise should be expanded to include not only trade but also manufacture and stockpiling. The arms trade should cease to provide an opportunity for profiteering on the part of any State.

For several years now we have been talking about restructuring the United Nations. The discussions continue, but, so far, little, if any, substantive reform has taken place. In our humble view, reform of the United Nations must reflect the perceptions and expectations of all Members. For many of the larger Member States, the United Nations is a forum in which to project and promote national policies. But in the case of the developing countries — in particular, the smaller Member States — the United Nations guarantees independence and sovereignty and provides an opportunity to participate in international dialogue. The United Nations also provides both the intellectual and the material input required for social and economic development in many developing countries.

It is clear that the General Assembly — the only forum in which all Members of the United Nations are represented — must be the main focus of our attention. The relationship between the General Assembly and other United Nations organs must be reviewed and put in proper perspective. The General Assembly itself must be able to appreciate and understand the work of the specialized and other agencies of the United Nations and to provide direction. It must also organize itself in such a way that it can deal more effectively with its business. Routine and symbolic resolutions must be dealt with efficiently, allowing the Assembly to focus on new and more important challenges.

The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is particularly intriguing. It is a common mistake to think that these two bodies function like the legislature and the executive of a government. This myth has been perpetuated by decades of Security Council paralysis and by the artificial prominence achieved by the General Assembly through the passing of ineffective but symbolically important resolutions. The reality is that there is only one body of authority in the United Nations — the Security Council. The Council's decisions are binding on all Members. They carry the sanction of international law. The Assembly is explicitly forbidden to interfere in the work of the Council unless requested to do so.

The case for reform of the Security Council is overwhelming. The Council must be expanded to reflect the new realities of international relations and to make it a more representative body. It is also important that the

deeper structural flaw be redressed and the Council be made more accountable.

The financial position of the United Nations continues to be a matter of concern. The sudden and quantum jump in expenditure on peace-keeping operations — now more than three times greater than expenditure on development — is becoming difficult to sustain. There are large-scale arrears in contributions. We do not object to peace-keeping operations, but it is clear that the finances of the United Nations must be put on a sound footing. Financial expenditures reflect the direction and priorities of the United Nations, as well as the commitment of its Members.

The Secretary-General, in his report entitled "An Agenda for Development", states:

> "Development is a fundamental human right. Development is the most secure basis for peace." *(A/48/935, para. 3)*

These statements provide, in brief form, the best rationale for recommitment to development in the post-cold-war era. Like peace, development is not a new issue before the United Nations; the United Nations and its agencies have been engaged in international development for decades. What is alarming today is that the gap between the standards of living of developed and of developing countries — the rich and the poor — is growing. The concern arises not because the well-to-do are doing better but because the poor are doing worse. It is no longer just poverty but the destitution of one fifth of the world's population that must be addressed.

Poverty saps the human spirit. It replaces hope with despair, creativity with dullness, admiration with envy, and compassion with indifference. Poverty weakens the body, making it susceptible to sickness and disease. Poverty clouds the mind, making it difficult for people to understand the circumstances of their deprivation, and generating bitterness against those they perceive as the cause of their misery. What is unfortunate is that in this day and age, given the advances that mankind has made in science and technology, commerce and industry and civil and social thought, poverty need not exist.

Considerable efforts have been made to put into proper perspective the major development issues of our time. The World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Eighth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), the World Conference on Human Rights and the recently concluded International Conference on Population and Development not only generated a remarkable convergence of views but also resulted in commitments to redress global concerns in the participants' respective areas. We have no doubt that the international community will approach the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995, with the same resolve and determination.

We have all committed ourselves to accepting the conclusions of the major conferences, including the various programmes of action and the prescribed targets. All countries are working hard to translate the commitments into action, but the resources available are insufficient for effective and lasting intervention It is a matter of great concern that, in fact, the resources made available for development are declining.

The future of global development clearly hinges on the provision of additional resources — additional resources in the shape of increased official development assistance for both multilateral and bilateral programmes; additional resources from international financial institutions; additional resources through direct foreign investment and trade; and additional resources generated internally through the creation of financial markets and the expansion of the revenue base.

While there seem to be many avenues for increasing the transfer of resources, the reality is that they have yielded little for most least-developed countries. International banking and investments are highly selective and, by their nature, will not be attracted to the least-developed countries, many of which have a small economy and a poor infrastructure. The creation of internal financial markets and the expansion of revenue are hampered by the low level of savings and the limited cash flow in the economy. The capacity of the least-developed countries to compete in international trade is also limited. Clearly, without increased official development assistance many least-developed countries will fall further behind — and their situation is already precarious.

It is ironic that resources for international development should decline when the United Nations agencies are embarking on a major thrust for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. We urge the donor community to continue supporting the United Nations funding agencies. Although the trend towards

bilateral cooperation is understandable, the donor community should draw on the advantages of working through the United Nations agencies, given their long experience and commendable performance in many areas. These agencies must regain the confidence of the donor community through greater efficiency and better coordination.

Credit is an essential form of input in any major development effort. The crushing debt burden of many developing countries and the manner in which future credit requirements will have to be met must be clearly dealt with in our dialogue on development. Our discussions must include the role of the Bretton Woods institutions, which must be made to work in harmony with the efforts of United Nations agencies.

Bhutan long ago accepted that development must be participatory and environmentally sustainable. To this end Bhutan has committed itself to maintaining 60 per cent of its land mass under forest cover, including 20 per cent as national parks. All development activities have been built around this approach. We have been fortunate to receive the generous assistance of, among others, India, Switzerland, Japan, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Norway, Kuwait, Germany, Australia and the United Kingdom. Considerable support has also been made available from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and the Asian Bank. We have never taken the involvement of any of our development partners for granted, and we take this opportunity to express the sincere gratitude of the people and the Government of Bhutan to all of them.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is a time for celebration. There is much that the United Nations has achieved for which we should all be proud. Yet it is also a time for reflection and self-assessment. The success of the next 50 years of the United Nations will depend largely on our ability to meet the challenges of global human development.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Several representatives wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish):* In exercise of its right of reply, my delegation would respectfully like to offer the following clarifications on a part of the statement made on 4 October by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Luis María Ramírez Boettner, during the current general debate.

In his statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay said:

> "Paraguay declares its deep concern at the situation affecting the Pilcomayo River, which is an international waterway inasmuch as its source is in Bolivia and it forms the border between Argentina and Paraguay.
>
> "We are now facing a major environmental problem since that international river springs from the mountains and is now growing shallower in its course because of sedimentation build-up. Moreover, the Pilcomayo, owing to works undertaken on Argentine territory, has had some 70 per cent of its volume absorbed in the territory of our neighbour. These facilities are doing a great deal of damage to the Chaco region of Paraguay, especially to its livestock and to the population." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 17th Meeting, p. 22)*

Argentina is deeply committed to a policy that deals with the problem of the environment and sustainable development at the national, regional and global levels.

As for the comments made on the Pilcomayo River, Argentina has taken part in costly projects, agreed upon between Argentina and Paraguay in November 1991, designed to mitigate the effects of the blocking of the Pilcomayo River in both countries. In fulfilment of the agreements of November 1991, Argentina properly and punctually completed the projects it was supposed to carry out in its territory, but the projects that are to be carried out in the territory of the Republic of Paraguay are still not completed. For this reason we consider it inappropriate to attribute the responsibility for the

damage done to the Chaco region of Paraguay to the projects carried out in Argentine territory.

Argentina agrees with the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the solution to the problem of the Pilcomayo River lies in the upper basin. We therefore regard as essential the ongoing participation of the Republic of Bolivia in the talks on this subject.

Finally, we wish once again to say to the Republic of Paraguay — to which we are bound by strong ties of historical brotherhood and by a successful economic-integration project, the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — that we are committed to promoting overall sustainable development in our region through joint, mature, objective analysis.

Mr. Zacharakis (Greece): I do not think there is really any need to take much of the Assembly's time for a lengthy reply to the Albanian representative, who on 7 October spoke in exercise of the right of reply to my statement of 5 October. Quite simply, while he assumes that he has given an answer to me, he has not, in fact, responded to the plethora of statements, summonses, appeals and accusations of the international organizations, non-governmental organizations and observers that I quoted in my statement.

Of course, I do not know whether this is due to the fact that the Albanian Government has nothing to say or whether it reflects, once more, its well-known mentality and attitude of defying and ignoring the democratic international community. This is precisely the problem, a problem which, as I have already underlined, does not constitute a bilateral difference between Greece and Albania but, rather, between the latter's Government and the international community, to which the Government in Tirane has yet to give a factual and convincing answer with regard to respect for fundamental human rights and the implementation of the relevant international instruments.

It is noteworthy in this respect that the Albanian representative gave us a rather poor picture of his country's present-day performance by comparing it not with the accepted high standards of modern, democratic societies but, rather, with a dictatorial Stalinist regime of the worst kind which was accepted and reigned in Albania for more than four decades.

Lastly, it is one thing to avoid responding to the specific negative assessments of international organizations and observers, while it is an entirely different thing to misinform the Assembly with false and inaccurate statements, such as the assurances given by the Albanian representative in an attempt to deny what I had said, and his statement that there is no report of Mr. Rjeplinski concerning the trial of the five minority leaders and, further, that only one document exists on this issue, in the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), entitled "Report of the trial monitoring in Tirane". Well, the truth is that there is indeed a report of Professor Rjeplinski, entitled "Report from the CSCE/Office of the Director of Human Rights Trial Observation in Tirane, Albania", dated 6 September, which has been circulated in the CSCE and will also be circulated in the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.